

growth and leverage billions of dollars of capital in distressed communities across the country.

And it would seriously hamper the ability of States to maintain clean drinking water, thus jeopardizing the health of residents.

In the end, the Congress chose courthouses over education, pork barrel highway projects over national service, Government travel over clean water.

At my instruction, the Administration has provided alternatives to the Congress that would produce greater deficit reduction than H.R. 1158, cutting even more in fiscal year 1995 spending than is included in H.R. 1158. But the spending reductions would come out of unnecessary projects and other spending, not investments in working families.

My position on this legislation has been made clear throughout the legislative process. The Administration strongly and consistently opposed the House version of the bill because it would have unnecessarily cut valuable, proven programs that educate our children, invest in our future, and protect the health and safety of the American people. We worked closely with the bipartisan leadership of the Senate to improve the bill, and I indicated my approval of those improvements. Regrettably, the conference went well beyond the spending reductions contained in the bipartisan compromise despite my Administration's consistent urging to adhere to the Senate bipartisan leadership amendment.

In addition, I continue to object to language that would override existing environmental laws in an effort to increase timber salvage. Increasing

timber salvage and improving forest health are goals that my Administration shares with the Congress. Over the last 6 months, my Administration has put in motion administrative reforms that are speeding salvage timber sales in full compliance with existing environmental laws. It is not appropriate to use this legislation to overturn environmental laws. Therefore, I urge the Congress to delete this language and, separately, to work with my Administration on an initiative to increase timber salvage and improve forest health.

My Administration has provided the Congress with changes that would enable me to sign revised legislation. I urge the Congress to approve a bill that contains the supplemental funding included in H.R. 1158—for disaster relief activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for the Federal response to the bombing in Oklahoma City, for increased antiterrorism efforts, and for providing debt relief to Jordan in order to contribute to further progress toward a Middle East peace settlement—along with my Administration's alternative restorations and offsets.

I will sign legislation that provides these needed supplemental appropriations and that reduces the deficit by at least as much as this bill. However, the legislation must reflect the priorities of the American people. H.R. 1158, as passed, clearly does not.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 7, 1995.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Line-Item Veto Legislation

June 7, 1995

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am deeply alarmed by today's press report that some Republicans in the House and Senate want to continue to hold back the line-item veto so that I don't have it during this year's budget process. The line-item veto is a vital tool to cut pork from the budget. If this Congress is serious about deficit reduction, it must pass the strongest possible line-item veto immediately, and send it to my desk so I can sign it right away.

This is not a partisan issue. Presidents Reagan and Bush asked Congress for it time and again, and so have I. It was part of the Republican Contract with America. It has strong support from members of Congress in both parties and both houses. No matter what party the President belongs to or what party has a majority in Congress, the line-item veto would be good for America.

If Congress will send me the line-item veto immediately, I am willing to pledge that this

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year, I will use it only to cut spending, not on tax expenditures in this year's budget. I have already put you on notice that I will veto any budget that is loaded with excessive tax breaks for the wealthy. But I need the line-item veto now to hold the line against pork in every bill the Congress sends me.

The American people have waited long enough. Congress should give them and the Presidency the line-item veto without further delay.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Bob Dole, Senate majority leader. This letter was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release.

Statement on the Commission on Immigration Reform

June 7, 1995

Having met this morning with Chair Barbara Jordan, I want to congratulate the Commission on Immigration Reform for its recommendation on legal immigration. Consistent with my own views, the Commission's recommendations are pro-family, pro-work, pro-naturalization. As with the Commission's first report on illegal immigration, which we are now aggressively imple-

menting, the Commission has again laid out a roadmap for the Congress to consider. It appears to reflect a balanced immigration policy that makes the most of our diversity while protecting the American workforce so that we can better compete in the emerging global economy. The administration looks forward to working with Congress on this issue.

Statement on Senate Passage of Antiterrorism Legislation

June 7, 1995

I am gratified that the Senate has passed a sweeping, bipartisan antiterrorism bill, as I called for in the wake of the bombing in Oklahoma City. This legislation will give law enforcement the tools it needs to do everything possible

to prevent this kind of tragedy from happening again. It will also help us prosecute and punish terrorists more effectively. I urge the House to do its part and get a bill on my desk without delay.

Message on the Rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady

June 8, 1995

All Americans rejoice with me at the successful rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady tonight and join his parents in their relief after days of uncertainty and anguish. Captain O'Grady's bravery and skill are an inspiration. So are the bravery and skill of those who took part in the operation to rescue him. They are all American heroes. Please give them each—and all the men and

women who supported them—our heartfelt thanks for a job done so very well. This is a moment that will long be remembered by a nation that is very proud of all her sons and daughters serving under your command.